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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Call from Ambassador Helms

1. Richard Helms called today to comment favorably on the recent article in U.S. News & World Report on the Agency and to inquire my personal view on the state of the Iran/Iraq war and what is happening in Saudi Arabia with regard to the war. I told him I thought the newspapers had it about right -- that the Iraqis were trying to turn up the pressure on the Iranians, the Iranians were preparing for a new ground offensive and that absent absolutely horrifying casualties I personally believed Khomeini would persevere in the war (and that his father lived to be 120).

2. With respect to Saudi Arabia, I told him I did not think much was going on. Ambassador Helms responded that they might be feeling they improved their manhood by shooting down an Iranian plane and I said that might be but they were trying to figure out what to do next.

3. He thanked me for all these blinding insights and we terminated the call. I cited the newspapers and otherwise stopped short of discussing any kind of specifics just short of being rude.

STAT



Robert M. Gates
Deputy Director for Intelligence

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